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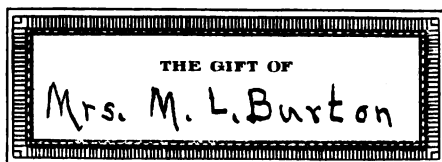
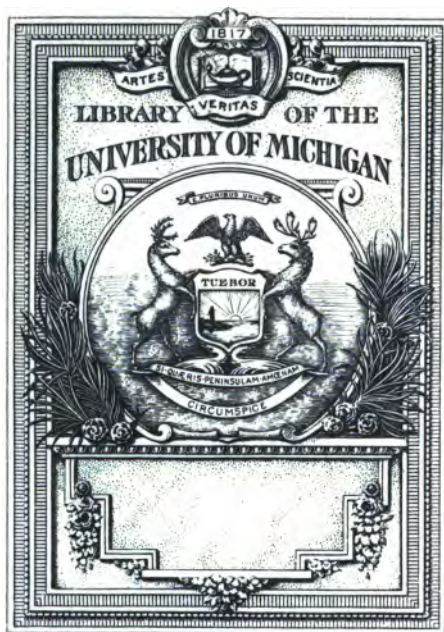
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The Price of Power

By
REV. J. ^{John} STUART HOLDEN, M. A.



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FOREWORD

THE following chapters are written with the desire of helping those who are seeking to live and work for Christ, but who are disappointed at the discovery of their personal powerlessness. There is in them no attempt at theological discussion, and their whole intention is to make clear the practical and experimental side of the all-comprehensive truth of the person and work of the Holy Spirit; for although "I believe in the Holy Ghost" finds a place in the Creeds of the Christian Church, He is nevertheless virtually unknown by many who subscribe to their formula.

To a large extent they assume that the reader has already experienced the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion, and they are sent forth with the earnest prayer that the same Spirit may be known of each in His further work of conforming the people of God to the image of Christ, and of enduing their surrendered lives with "power from on high" for His service in the world.

J. S. H.

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"The law of the Spirit
of Life in Christ Jesus."
—ROM. 8: 2.

I

THE PRICE OF POWER

THE great need of which Christians everywhere are conscious is that of *power*. Wherever a number of believers gather together for prayer, this is usually the burden of their cry. The need is so patent and so universal as not to require any insistence or emphasis, for it is on all hands attested by fruitlessness of life and by barrenness of service. The fact is that despite the promises of God, the majority of His people are living lives which are so powerless and ineffective as to be a standing contradiction of the ideals and enduements of His Word. Why is this? Obviously the cause is not to be sought in Him but in ourselves, and if we will honestly set ourselves to discover the secrets of personal powerlessness, He will not only show them to us, but will also effectually deal with them as we submit our lives to His judgment. And the importance of this attitude upon our part cannot be overestimated, for while we are bewailing our powerlessness, souls are dying and we are not reaching them; the world is misconceiving Christ

and we are not offering a faithful representation of Him ; He is expecting glory in our lives and is being disappointed. That this state of things may be brought to an end, it is our manifest duty to learn for ourselves how to secure the fullest measure of the power of God,—in other words to know *what is the price of power*. And in using this expression let it not be thought that power can be purchased, for like all else that we receive from God it is a gift, and in our dealings with Him there can be nothing in the nature of a *quid pro quo*. But it is a gift which is conditioned, and the *price of power* so called, is simply the fulfillment of those conditions upon which His power can become operative in and through our lives.

Now in the Word of God which is the text-book of spiritual dynamics, His power is always identified with His Spirit, and almost all the present weakness, both personal and corporate, in the Church of God may be traced to an incomplete recognition of the work of the Holy Ghost. To many He is known only as an influence, intermittent at best. They ascribe their conversion to Him, but know little of His controlling and sanctifying presence in life, or of His power in service. Hence Christian life to them has become a long weary struggle to attain to the ideal of Christ's example, which daily seems to recede further into the realm of the impossible. Many, sadly recognizing the

difference between the ideal and the actual, between Christ's life and theirs, have settled down to the calm of despair, and interpreting the Promises by their own experience, have concluded that no higher type of life is attainable. It is to help such that these chapters are written, for with a right understanding of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, will come a true conception of the nature and purpose of His power, while a willingness to pay the price will result in a new experience of His sufficiency in all the necessities and demands of life.

And at the outset there are a few fundamental axioms which must be recognized, for they govern the whole subject in its personal bearings :—

(1) *We can never have power until we are implicitly obedient to all that we know of God's will regarding our own personal lives.* The direction and force of external aim is always determined by the fashion of inner life, and power is always according to purity. If there is anything known to be unholy, unclean, unworthy, yet willfully persisted in, we shall pray in vain for an endowment with the power of God. The secret of powerlessness is very often to be found in indulgence already condemned by conscience, or in indifference to its imperious demand for renunciation of act or habit contrary to the Divine purpose of holiness. The one thing needed on the part of a man who realizes his lack

of power is honestly to pray : " Search me, O God," and to wait in the presence of God that He may do it. To such an one there will be neither delay nor uncertainty in God's answer as to that which must be renounced or readjusted as the price of power.

There are few who do not realize the necessity of being " in the Spirit " for specific acts of service and ministry, but do we all realize that this necessitates living " in the spirit " at all times, even when unseen by others and when engaged in the ordinary and so-called secular details of life ? Some animals known to zoology as amphibious, can live both in water and upon land as occasion may arise ; but there is no analogy in the Christian life to such. We cannot live partly in the flesh and partly in the Spirit, partly " unto ourselves " and partly " unto Him." Labor must be the expression of life if it is to be truly effective, and all true and abiding influence is but the effluence of the Holy Spirit who dwells within to sanctify and control. Only His outflowing as a river of living water can help, and heal, and bless souls, and for this He must have a clean channel. In this connection it is well to recognize the power of seeming trifles to hinder the free flow of His power. A trifling disobedience, a tiny sin, a microscopic indulgence may be enough to render the whole life powerless. Some time ago I saw a man who had

lost the sight of an eye by reason of a small splinter of brass which had somehow gotten there as he worked at a lathe. It was only a tiny thing in itself, but upon the retina of his eye it was sufficiently mighty to deprive him forever of sight, and to rob him of half the light of the sun for the rest of his life. Similarly, an act or habit of sin viewed by itself may not seem great, but when judged as it must be in its hindering relationship to the will of God, it is the most serious matter in life for the one to whom it pertains.

(2) In order to know the fullest possible measure of power for service there must be a *complete separation unto the Divine purpose for which power is bestowed*. God does not invest a man with power for any other work than that of the Kingdom, and no man who does not renounce all forms of leadership other than the spiritual can ever know the enduement of a personal Pentecost. Politics, literature, the fine arts, intellectual pursuits, etc., have each their own legitimate sphere, but the power of the Holy Ghost is never bestowed to make a man a worker or a leader in these things. Only for the glory of Christ in the salvation of souls can the holy enduement be sought with any certainty of realization, and herein is the explanation of the failure of much desire and many prayers. Those who know anything about the laws which govern electrical power recognize the

supreme importance of complete insulation if electricity is to be conserved and applied to any useful purpose. And this fact is in the nature of a complete analogy with regard to spiritual power. Of course, this does not mean that the man who seeks to be filled with the Spirit is to have no *contact* with the world, for were that so, he could never become a means of blessing to it. All our necessary correspondences with the world in the social and commercial relationships of life, are but so many God-given opportunities of ministry to the world's great need, and the one who would know the power of the Spirit must so regard all his daily dealings with men. It is a misconception to think that we can *bring men to Christ*, for the weight of the task is beyond us. Our real mission is to *bring Christ to men*, and life is our opportunity for its fulfillment. Everything must be subordinated to this end if the power of God is to be ours.

(3) Part of the price of power is *time spent in secret communion with God*. Those who will not take time for the study of the Word of God and for prayer, will never know the fullness of His power working in or through them. It is only by maintaining the attitude of waiting in His presence, that we can learn to know ourselves and to know Him, and seeing the things of our lives in His light can judge them by His standards. All our public life before men is at its best a reflection and

echo of our private life before God. As in a lamp every variation of flame and light is a record of the unseen assimilation of oil by the wick, so in our lives every variation of secret communion with God is faithfully recorded in our service before men. Much prayer means much power; little prayer means little power; no prayer means no power. And time thus spent is rightly regarded as part of the price of power, because in these busy days such time needs to be taken from other pursuits and enjoyments. Many lives are over-full, and it may mean less time spent in social enjoyments, in secular reading, or in the pursuit of pleasure or business, in order to maintain contact with Him, to whom alone power belongs and from whom it proceeds. But such sacrifice will be amply justified in its results. It is remarkable that one of the earliest testimonies to Christ was to the effect that "We know that Thou art a teacher come from God." There was about our Lord that which instinctively convinced men that He came from God, and as His witnesses this quality should also characterize us in all our service. It is only when we come *from* God, that men will in response to our message come *to* Him.

(4) If we desire to know the fullness of God's power we must be *willing for complete identification with Christ in the consequences of a Spirit-empowered life and service.* The exercise of the

power of God through Him involved Him in suffering, rejection, scorn, and death ; and in the laying down of His life under such treatment, He blessed men to the full with the salvation of God. Are we willing to be so treated if by the laying down of our lives in daily sacrifice, those among whom we live and work may come to know Him "Whom to know is life eternal" ? We want a partnership in His power, but are we prepared for the fellowship of His sufferings ? It has been truly said that "when we cease to bleed, we cease to bless," and this willingness to "follow His steps" is part of the price of power. Unpopularity is one of the last things which we naturally desire, and is in itself one of the hardest things to bear, but since the world has not changed in its attitude towards Christ, He living *in* us will receive just the same treatment as was meted out to Him when He lived *for* us. There is no easier pathway possible to the one who seeks the power of God for the glory of God, and "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master."

Are we willing to pay such a price for power in view of all that an endued life means to God and to the world ? Do we desire above all things that He should be magnified whether it be by life or by death ? Has this desire become a burden upon us ? Then cast that burden upon the Lord and hearken again to His word,—“If ye being evil

know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Fulfill these His conditions, and you shall know that "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."

"Thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow Me afterwards."—JOHN 13: 36.

II

RESPONSIBILITY AND INABILITY

THERE are three notes which ring out with great clearness in the New Testament, and which when understood do much to interpret the experiences of many of God's people. They are —

Responsibility, Inability, Possibility.

The first-named, *Responsibility*, is that which all readily recognize. If we are abiding in Christ it is incumbent upon us "to walk even as He walked," to manifest His life and love to the world around us, and to serve and suffer for its blessing as He did. This is a high standard, but the difficulty of living up to it does not affect the obvious duty in which our profession involves us. It is high because it is of Divine appointment. As a call it is worthy of God, and as an aim is worthy of the highest endeavor and fullest obedience of our redeemed lives. Now all the commands of God are covenanted possibilities of power for the fulfillment of that purpose of holiness which they express.

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Hence there can be no excuse for any personal consent to life on a lower plane, for within the kingdom of God what *ought* to be *may* be, and what *may* be *must* be. And to "walk even as He walked" is to present to the world a witness which cannot be controverted. If the attitude of the world be critical such a testimony silences the criticism, just as the fragrance of the flower forbids all stricture upon the worth of the seed. If on the other hand, the world's attitude is wistful, as so often it is, the beauty of holiness attracts and encourages to a closer acquaintance with the soul-satisfying Christ. "Ye are My witnesses" is still His word to us, and in no other way can we be true to the commission than by setting ourselves to follow Him fully. But while this is the ideal which we accept and towards which we press, most of us are very conscious of shortcoming. We pray, work, strain every nerve to "follow His steps," and yet the repeated failure of our best efforts but serves to convince us of our *Inability*. As water cannot rise above its own level, so human nature has no power to rise to the height of Divine life; and while a lofty ideal may ennoble, it does not necessarily enable. All Christ's dealings with His earliest followers go to show us this. He was continually revealing His own character to them, and showing to them the inner meaning of all His service, so that they desired earnestly to follow Him,

and found they could not. His words to Peter, quoted at the head of this chapter, only serve to confirm what Peter and the others had already discovered in their own experience—the insufficiency of their own best resources. They were *devoted* but *defeated*, as are many to-day who, like them, are nevertheless keenly desirous of following their Lord. Their lives but attest their inability to realize their own ideals, and while conscience is yet sensitive their hearts are sick and despairing. Are we to conclude then, that such is God's best for His children? Are failure and defeat and disappointment to be our perpetual portion? The answer lies in the third dominant note of our Lord's teaching—the *Possibility* which is ours in Him. To follow Him, the disciple must be endued with His Spirit, for every Divine precept presupposes for its performance Divine power. A Spirit-filled Christ can only be followed by Spirit-filled disciples. Holiness is not human life brought up to the highest possible level of development, but is Divine life brought down to the lowest possible level of condescension. It is by His indwelling Spirit that we may hope to have the life of Christ reproduced in us, that life which we have ourselves vainly sought to imitate. There is a world of difference between an imitation and a reproduction, as for instance; between any labored copy of an artist's picture, and his own easy reduplication of

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it. And we have begun to learn the secret of all powerful and fruitful life when we commence to apply this principle to our Christian responsibility. "Thou canst not" is blotted out in the glorious promise "Thou shalt," and the "now" of failure is brought to an end in the "afterwards" of soul-satisfaction and victory. Here then is the explanation of the life to which we are called by God, and constrained by inner responsive desire—"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1: 8).

God does not send us either to walk or to warfare at our own charges, and His great scheme of salvation not only includes *pardon* but *power*. And the power by which Christ is reproduced in His followers, and by which they give their lives in true service to God and the world, is the direct outcome of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

"In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son . . . to redeem them that are under the law" (Gal. 4: 4-5).

"As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the sons of God" (John 1: 12).

"And because ye are (i. e., have thus become) sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts" (Gal. 4: 6).

Now the first great fact to be received and borne in mind by those who seek to know the power of the Holy Spirit is that His reception is a definite

act of faith distinctly separable from conversion. For proof of this, refer to concrete instances in the Word of God —

I. The early disciples and apostles.

They were certainly converted, having left all to follow Christ (Mark 10 : 28), and so having proved their desire to be wholly His. But they had not then received the Holy Spirit in fullness. And just because their lives were not yet being fed from the same secret springs as was Christ's, they came so far behind His example. Hence their selfishness (Matt. 19 : 27), ambition (Mark 10 : 37), lack of love for souls (Luke 9 : 54), fear of close identification with Christ (Matt. 26 : 56), inability to receive His teaching (John 16 : 12), unbelief (Matt. 17 : 20).

Not until Christ was raised from the dead did they receive the Holy Spirit (John 20 : 22), Whose coming had been the subject of Christ's promise to them (John 14-16), and Whose manifestation in power was only fully known after Christ's Ascension (Acts 1 : 8 ; 2 : 1).

(Notice the distinction between the Person of the Holy Spirit whom they received on the evening of the Resurrection, and the power of the Spirit which came upon them at Pentecost ; a distinction which will be dwelt upon in Chapter VII.)

II. Lest it should be urged by any that this reception of the Holy Spirit was of necessity a

distinct experience in the case of the disciples because the dispensation of the Spirit had not then begun, look also at the case of the Samaritan converts (Acts 8: 5-17). Under the preaching of Philip large numbers were converted and the great joy of a Revival was in the city. Of the genuineness of their conversion there can be no doubt, certainly none existed in the minds of the Apostles at Jerusalem (8: 14). But although they probably had received the witness of the Spirit to their newly-found adoption just as their conversion itself was a work of the same Spirit, yet they had not received Him in His fullness, for this was the burden of the prayer of Peter and John, who were sent down to them (8: 15); and surely a very definite experience is recorded in the words, "and they received the Holy Ghost" (8: 17).

III. *The Ephesian Converts* (Acts 19: 1-7).

They had been brought to Christ through the preaching of Apollos (18: 24-28), but he had been unable to lead them into any blessing beyond his own experience, and when Paul arrived at Ephesus this was his first query—"Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" Their answer alone is sufficient to establish the fact that it is possible thus to be converted and in earnest, and yet to be entirely ignorant of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. "Life" and "life more abundantly" are not synonymous experiences!

I have used the word *separable* not without meaning; for while there is no need for the lapse of any time between the reception of Christ for salvation and the reception of the Holy Spirit for sanctification of life and power in service, yet in the experience of the great majority of Christians, as in the cases already cited, and as in the case of Paul himself, who, converted on the road to Damascus (Acts 9: 5-6), was not filled with the Holy Spirit until three days afterwards (Acts 9: 17), this personal knowledge of the power of God only comes at varying intervals after conversion. The reason is twofold —

(a) Lack of knowledge of the Word of God.

When souls are brought to Christ, most frequently the only blessing of which they are taught anything by their instructors is the gift of forgiveness and justification, and with that they rest content. They are not told that Christ who died for them seeks to live in them, and often for a long period such ones go on doing their human best; and though conscious of failure, are yet ignorant of the promises regarding the gift of the Holy Spirit, the birthright portion of the believer and the covenant promise of the Father. They live in post-Pentecostal days but have a pre-Pentecostal experience.

(b) Lack of knowledge of personal need.

Up to conversion the pressing need of the soul

is for certainty of forgiveness, and at the time of its realization the vision is often completely filled. The need of a new power by which to live is at that time unrecognized, and is only discovered later through repeated failure. Then it is that the burden presses, and the honest soul becomes willing to pay any price if only the powerlessness which spells personal defeat and brings dishonor to the Lord's name may be replaced by an abiding experience of the power of God.

The Divine plan of salvation is complete because it *is* Divine, and in the circle of grace all need, past, present, and future, is met by God's provision. The gift of God to the world is life in Christ. His gift to His new-born children is life more abundantly in the Holy Spirit. Hence the full Gospel is a proclamation of the twofold gift, to sinners a call to receive the one by the faith which appropriates, and to believers to receive the other by the faith which yields.

Some however, while recognizing their lack of the Spirit's power fail to appreciate the necessity of a definite reception of Him. They reason from the fact that the Spirit has been outpoured upon the Church of God and has never been withdrawn, that hence there is no need for any such personal experience of His incoming. Let a simple analogy suffice. As has already been stated, God's twofold gift is *Christ to the world*, and *the Holy*

Spirit to the Church. Now the first great gift of Christ, must be personally appropriated by faith, or otherwise the world for which He died fails to realize the benefits of His death. So the second great gift, the Holy Spirit, must likewise be received by simple faith, or the Church in its individual members fails to realize the results for which He has been given. In either case unbelief makes the gift of none effect. Others, knowing their conversion to be entirely the Spirit's work, and enjoying His witness to their sonship, incline to the idea that by a process of inward growth they will attain to His fullness of life and power; failing to discern the difference between a work of the Spirit and the Spirit Himself. It is one thing to be born of the Spirit, and another to be filled with Him in such wise as that He controls and guides and sanctifies the whole life, which becomes in truth a "temple of the Holy Ghost." It is one thing to be a son of God, but an entirely different thing to live as a son of God should live; one thing to say that we abide in Him but another thing altogether to "walk even as He walked"; one thing to have life and another thing to have it "more abundantly." At conversion we submit to the Spirit's work and are led to the Cross by His gracious influence, where we receive the gift of God by faith in the crucified Saviour. This answers to our then conscious need. But later, when we

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realize our further deep need, we receive the promised Holy Spirit by a similar act of faith, which carries with it the definite surrender of our entire being to Him. There is a necessary place for growth, but it is growth *in* and not *into* this grace. What is being here insisted upon is the necessity for that *initial* reception of the Spirit which makes growth possible by subsequent daily renewal. This is as a crisis which leads to a process, an act of faith which develops into a maintained attitude of surrender, in response to which "the renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3 : 5) becomes ours.

And all this is not to be understood for a moment as being a departure from Christ, except as a builder departs from the foundation-stone in building upon it. It is only in Him that there is given unto us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness," and this is but the making experimentally true in our lives of that which is already judicially true in Him. It is the possessing of our possessions, which can only enrich us in the same measure as in which they are really appropriated, just as figures standing to credit at the bank, are only of power to minister to need, when translated into actual currency. True power is just the translating of the facts of God into the factors of life, and simple faith is the accomplishing medium.

**"The Kingdom of God
is not in word but in
power."—I COR. 4: 20.**

III

THE HOLY SPIRIT—POWER FOR LIFE

THE former chapter was occupied with a general statement of the need of a personal reception of the Holy Spirit, and the separable character of that reception from the work of the Spirit in conversion. The aim of this present one is to show how impossible of attainment is the life to which we are called apart from the power of the Spirit. The best product of human power is but cultured human nature, and though that may be an honest attempt to imitate Christ in walk and work, it can never reproduce Him. That desired result can alone be the work of the Holy Ghost, who is given to make true in our experience what is already true in the promise and purpose of God. In other words, holiness of character and life is acquired, not by imposed new precept but by interposed new power, the power of the Divine Spirit. If we are under His control, and walk in obedience to His rule, the outcome must be a reproduced likeness to Jesus Christ, which shall make us His witnesses indeed before a beholding world.

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The Word of God teaches that every grace of the Christian character is directly attributed to the Holy Spirit, and every qualification for Christian service likewise. In seeking His power however, it must always be borne in mind that the Divine order is life first then labor, for contrary to the general idea which many seem to have on this subject, the outstanding characteristic of the Spirit's endowment is that it is power for holy living, out of which spontaneously springs holy service. And the necessity for this recognition cannot be over-emphasized, for after all what a man *is*, is of far greater importance than what he does, and his character is far more eloquent in the cause of Christ than his words. In the last analysis of this matter *you* are your message to the world concerning God.

A reference to the titles of the Spirit is full of instruction as to the character of His work in the soul. He is—

The Spirit of Life.—Rom. 8 : 2.

The Spirit of Adoption.—Rom. 8 : 15.

The Spirit of Truth.—John 14 : 17.

The Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation.—Eph. 1 : 17.

The Spirit of Holiness.—Rom. 1 : 4.

The Spirit of Power, Love, and Discipline.—2 Tim. 1 : 7.

The Spirit of Faith.—2 Cor. 4 : 13.

The Spirit of Grace.—Heb. 10 : 29.

The Spirit of Glory.—1 Pet. 4 : 14.

In tabulating these titles, I have purposely avoided following accurate Biblical order, that each one may exhibit a further development in the soul's experience of the progressive working of the Divine Spirit. A study of them cannot but serve to impress upon any sincere believer his need of Him, for since He is the Author of holiness, love, faith, etc., it follows that apart from Him these things cannot be known as realities.

For every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness
Are His alone.

Further, to the Holy Spirit is ascribed all heart cleansing (Acts 15 : 8-9). It is His work to glorify Christ by taking of His and shewing it unto us (John 16 : 14), and when He comes into the yielded heart He applies the Precious Blood to all the sin of which, up to that present, we are admittedly conscious and repentant. Thus to receive the Holy Spirit is to receive a definite cleansing from all known sin ;—" *giving them the Holy Ghost . . . purifying their hearts by faith*" (Acts 15 : 8-9). Following that crisis of cleansing, the Spirit continues to enlarge the sphere of our consciousness, revealing further sins of which hitherto we

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were not aware, and giving us power not only to see but to cease. Thus (1 Pet. 1: 22) we are cleansed "*by obeying the Truth* (which is always the Spirit's instrument in conviction of sin), *through the Spirit*"; and thus are daily freed from its power (Rom. 8: 2; Gal. 5: 16). As powerless as he is to drain the ocean, so is man before the task of cleansing his own heart from sin. When the Spirit enters to take full possession of that heart, He empties it by displacement, and abides to deliver it daily from all attacks from without, so that "*when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall put him to flight*" (Isa. 59: 19).

Only by the power of the Spirit is made possible the enthronement of Jesus in our lives (1 Cor. 12: 3), for He inspires the love and obedience which are alike the conditions and the characteristics of the life in which Jesus is really the Lord. "*When He is come unto you He shall glorify Me*" (John 16: 14); and it is thus by bringing redeemed lives into the practical possession of Christ, and under the law of obedience to Him Who is our Saviour and Sovereign, that the Spirit glorifies Him. Hence we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order that Jesus may ever have the place He demands in our lives, and that we may continually live in remembrance of the fact that we are not our own, but His.

Transformation of character into the likeness of

Christ is again the direct operation of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3: 18), and as without the sun the photographic image cannot be printed upon the sensitized film, so apart from the Holy Spirit, the moral glories of the Lord Jesus can never become ours in any sense save that of desire. We have seen above that He reveals the things in the life which should not be there and removes them, that is the negative. He also reveals the things in Christ's life which are not in ours and should be, and at the same moment gives us to claim them by faith, so that our completeness in Him (Col. 2: 10) increasingly becomes actual, that is the positive.

Thus His life effaces our death, His grace takes the place of our ugliness, and we are continually "being changed from glory to glory as by the Spirit." This inner transformation of character has its outward manifestation, which again is attributed to the Spirit, so that transformed lives shine out before the world as "*Epistles of Christ written with the Spirit of the Living God*" (2 Cor. 3: 3).

The Holy Spirit also is the source of all teaching (John 14: 26; 16: 13; 1 Cor. 2: 13; 1 John 2: 20-27). He who inspired the Word is the only One to interpret its meaning, and without His constant illumination we cannot understand aught of it. Much of the difficulty which men raise about the inspiration of the Word of God to-day,

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is the result of the natural man trying to discern the things which belong to the Spirit. Much also of the great lack of enlightenment in the Word which characterizes so many who daily read but find little food in the Book, is consequent upon failure to recognize Him who alone can lead "into all the truth." A man filled with the Holy Spirit is above all things a man who is continually being taught in the Word of God, while apart from the Spirit he knows nothing.

Again, the great subject of *prayer*, that comprehensive need of the Christian's life, is intimately bound up in the personal fullness of the Holy Spirit. It is "*by the One Spirit, we have access unto the Father*" (Eph. 2 : 18), and by the same Spirit, having entered the audience-chamber through the "new and living way," we are enabled to pray in the will of God (Rom. 8 : 15, 26-27 ; Gal. 4 : 6 ; Eph. 6 : 18 ; Jude 20-21). Here is the secret of prevailing prayer, to pray under a direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Whose petitions for us and through us are always according to the Divine purpose, and hence certain of answer. "Praying in the Holy Ghost" is but coöperating with the will of God, and such prayer is always victorious. How many Christians there are who cannot pray, and who seek by effort, resolve, joining prayer circles, etc., to cultivate in themselves the "holy art of intercession," and all to no purpose. Here for

them and for all is *the only secret of a real prayer life*—"Be filled with the Spirit," Who is "the Spirit of grace and supplication."

All guidance in the pathway of the will of God is also the direct work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8: 14). To the obedient soul there is no perplexity as to the next step, for there is no uncertainty in the voice of the Comforter, and He unerringly guides those whose lives He controls in the pathway of true blessedness. But He does not guide where He does not govern. If you would know His certain guidance in all the details of life (and it is in details that the need of Divine guidance is greatest, for upon little things great issues so often depend) you must seek His fullness. You cannot know the influence apart from the indwelling.

Again, all love, both towards the Lord Himself and towards others, is the work of the Spirit in us (Rom. 5: 5; Col. 1: 8; Eph. 3: 14-19).

It is quite readily admitted that love is one of the greatest needs of the children of God to-day, love which is self-effacing, which sacrifices for others, which yearns over the lost, and which conquers all by its quiet power. And yet how is it to be produced in us except by the Divine Spirit? Read carefully the analysis of love in 1 Cor. 13, and the impossibility of attainment will so burn itself into you, that you are constrained to say: "Who is

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sufficient for these things?" Thanks to our Lord's full provision for our every need, we may have that love "shed abroad in our hearts," uninterruptedly. "The fruit of the Spirit is love," but without Him nothing is more impossible of creation.

The same indeed applies to all fruit-bearing (Gal. 5: 22-23). How wonderfully was that cluster of graces seen in the life of our Lord Himself, and we are His branches in such wise as that the same Spirit flowing through even the smallest twig, will when allowed free course bring forth the same fruit. It is not the work of the Christian, so much as the fruit of the Spirit in his life which glorifies the Father and blesses the world. But in order to have a life of fruit and fragrance, nothing will suffice but the power of the Holy Spirit;—and why should we content ourselves with anything less?

The Holy Spirit is again the Author of all hope (Rom. 15: 13), the secret of continual optimism. Here is salvation from all down-heartedness and despondency, from all gloom and heaviness, not merely by effort of will girding oneself to look on the brighter side of life, but by His indwelling power "abounding in hope." There is much to discourage and depress the child of God in the world to-day, and nothing more effectually enfeebles his life and stultifies his testimony than to yield

to the snare. But the Holy Spirit is always counteracting that temptation by directing the eyes of the heart away from self and circumstance to the all-conquering Jesus, and opening them to see the chariots of fire, with which the mountains of difficulty and conflict are always full (2 Kings 6: 17). In a more special sense also, the Spirit fills us with the great hope of the Lord's return. He not only testifies to Christ's past *Atonement*, and to His present *Advocacy*, but also to His future *Advent*, and to the soul who is filled with the Spirit the inspiring hope of life, is the near coming of the Lord. And not only does the Spirit teach this as a truth, but by His indwelling power alone can we be kept in readiness for the Lord's appearing. It is "through the Spirit" that the attitude of watchful waiting is maintained (Gal. 5: 5). Only in His power can we meet the King in the hour of His coming with "lamps shining."

Such a life, some of the essential constituents of which have been thus briefly pointed out, will necessarily receive rude treatment from the world. The Spirit-filled believer can never be popular with a world which "lieth in the wicked one," and such an one will often be reproached for the Name of his Lord. Then the Spirit Himself is the sustaining power of those, who without Him, would be much tempted to give in under the pressure of the opposition, for then in special manner and measure,

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"The Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you" (1 Pet. 4: 14).

Such considerations as these all point to the same great truth, the impossibility of living the life to which God calls apart from the enduement which God covenants. And there is no possible excuse for any one who fails to "walk even as He walked," since at our own disposal is the same power as that by which His human life was lived, if we will but pay the price.

Let these truths, pondered in our hearts, bring us to acknowledge our need of the Holy Spirit. And with that acknowledgment made unto and in the presence of the Lord, shall come the sure answer of our faithful God, "Ask and ye *shall* receive."

"Ye shall receive
power."—ACTS 1 : 8.

IV

THE HOLY SPIRIT—POWER FOR SERVICE

IN the preceding chapter the fact of the Holy Spirit being the Author of all Christian grace and the Source of all true Christian living, served to show the personal need of His indwelling in order that the life of Christ may be reproduced in His people. The aim of this one is to show that all true and fruitful *service* in the Kingdom of God can only be rendered in the power of the Spirit, and thus to emphasize the supreme importance in view of the service to which we are called of the fulfillment of the conditions which govern the reception of the Divinely-appointed power. Any holiness which has not the outcome of self-sacrificing service for others is miscalled, and misconceives the Divine purpose. "I will bless thee and be thou a blessing" expresses the eternal principle of God's dealings with men. All violation of it in the search upon our part for the fullness of His blessing, without practical recognition of the obligation involved, is but a refined form of

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selfishness. But it is just here, in the realm of their Christian service that the majority of God's people are only too conscious of their lack. Failure, barrenness, and absence of result too frequently mark their best efforts to extend Christ's Kingdom, though their endeavor and earnestness leave nothing to be desired. What is the secret of it all? Is it not that in too many cases the Holy Spirit is not recognized and honored, and the work is being attempted without His enduement?

Just as we have already seen that the Christ-life is impossible apart from the power of the Spirit, so without Him the Christ-service is likewise impossible. Hence much of the toilsome effort in the Christian Church is but lost labor, and can never be aught else until by the appropriation of yielding faith, the Holy Spirit is received by individual workers to be the mighty dynamic of all their service. In like manner as He is the Source of all that goes to make up a fragrant and Christlike life, so the Holy Spirit is the power for all that is constituent in effective service. To those who are under His control He works in them, not only to will but also to do (Phil. 2 : 13).

It is the Holy Spirit who alone endues with power (Acts 1 : 8). Before Pentecost the disciples who loved their Lord were quite unable to witness for Him, and even at the time when their witness to His lordship would have been of greatest value

to Him, "they all forsook Him and fled." But what a change did Pentecost make! Not only was there an imparted strength to speak boldly for Christ, but a power also which made them courageous in the face of opposition, careless of personal consequence, faithful in the face of strong temptation, incessant in the work committed to them, and joyful when, as a result of testimony, they were "counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name." But the Church of to-day has, to a large extent, forgotten the secret stairway into the upper room, and hence no awe comes upon the multitudes when she speaks of "the wonderful works of God" in their hearing. Organization is multiplied and perfected but souls are not won to Christ in any measure commensurate to the energies expended, and weary workers are too often overheard saying down-heartedly after some more than usually disappointing experience,—“Lord, why could we not cast him out?” On all hands, to those who have courage enough to face the facts, the need is obvious, and in no way will it be really met but by united recognition of the Spirit of power, and by individual reception of, and dependence upon Him. But often our prayer for power reveals a too limited conception of its character, and we imagine that it simply means ability to speak and preach, while the power which the early disciples received at Pentecost was an endowment equally for the service of speech and

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silence, for suffering and sacrifice. The power of the Spirit as receivable by each individual believer is just strength to do the present will of God. This all-comprehending endowment is not to be confused with the special gifts of the Spirit, given for special service to special people—though never on the ground of personal merit. In a later chapter (VII) this subject will be dealt with at fuller length, but here let it be clearly understood that for every service to which God calls His people, there is power in the Holy Spirit to meet the particular requirements of that service. If you have not the power, is it not because you are not in right relationship with the Person ?

Again it is the work of the Holy Spirit to appoint to service as well as to empower for it (Acts 20 : 28), and His power can never be known apart from His explicit commission. That is, you cannot expect to receive power from Him unless He has appointed you to the work for which you are seeking power. There are numbers of people who are busily engaged in forms of Christian work to which the Lord has never called them, numbers who have engaged themselves with branches of service because of the attractiveness of the work, or because it affords scope for their peculiar natural abilities, or because they enjoy it, etc., without any reference to the mind of the Spirit. Such can never know His power, for He only endues for that particular

work to which He calls, and His gifts are never divorced from His government.

Hence He "separates and sends forth" (Acts 13 : 2-4) those whom He chooses for special service, and His presidency must be recognized if His power is to be realized in the life of the Church to-day. There are those who will never be really endued with power in the work of the home-land, because He has already sought to separate and send them to "the regions beyond," and probably the contrary is also true. Here again, we are brought face to face with our intense need of His power, for we cannot even know the things of God, much less can we do them without the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2 : 13).

Again, in the service to which He appoints, He both constrains (Acts 8 : 29 ; 10 : 19-20), and restrains (Acts 16 : 6-7). How many blunders would be avoided if this office of the Spirit was but recognized. This surely is the equipment of true tact, of which there is such lack to-day, particularly in what is known as personal work. For under the constraint of the Spirit one will not talk indiscriminately about the things of God, casting pearls before those unable to value them, but will speak only to some, and be silent to others, and will find that in either case the action has been a Spirit-forged link in a chain of many other links, all Spirit-forged, which ends in the accomplishment of

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His great purposes of grace in some soul. This clear guidance of the Spirit is the condition of all efficient service, for He never puts "a round man in a square hole," nor constrains a soul to take up service for which all his past has manifestly unfitted or positively disqualified him. And no amount of merely human wisdom and acumen can properly take the place of this control by the Spirit. The exigencies of work for God and His Kingdom demand nothing less than the fullness of His power in the hearts and lives of all His servants.

And in no realm of service is this more clearly seen than in that of utterance, for speech is one of the commonest as well as one of the most powerful vehicles for conveying the saving truths of the Gospel to the world. Here again, we see the Holy Spirit as the inspirer of all effective utterance (Matt. 10 : 19-20 ; Acts 2 : 4 ; 6 : 9-10). Apart from His power, all human words about the things of God, however cleverly and thoughtfully expressed, will fail to reach the heart and penetrate the conscience of men, for intellect only influences intellect. This is the reason why so much preaching is void of result. Where there is no power of the Spirit the matter may be fluently expressed and expounded, but as a message it fails in its mission, for the truth of God needs to be interpenetrated with and impelled by the power of God that it may go forth as an arrow shot from a bow—swift in its

flight and certain in its effect. The word of God is only a sword when it is "the sword of the Spirit," wielded by His power in human hands. In view of the great need of messages having power to arrest and arouse men, how urgent to-day is the call—"Be filled with the Spirit."

Again, it is only the Holy Spirit who inspires all true unity (1 Cor. 12 : 13) and fellowship (Phil. 2 : 1-2), in the service of God ; and what is more necessary ? On every hand to-day is to be found division amongst Christians, which evokes derision on the part of the world, and the upbuilding of social and denominational barriers which only serve to keep people apart, and to diffuse the strength which, if it were but united in service, would prove a mighty power against the hosts of Satan. There are numbers of earnest believers who never know the joy of fellowship nor the strength of union with Christians of other churches, and who are thereby losing not only joy but power. The Spirit, when He fills souls, welds them as by holy fire with all other Spirit-filled souls, and "all one in Christ Jesus " becomes not a truism, but a blessedly-experienced truth. This the world waits to see, and when it does it will believe on Him whose Name we bear. How absolutely necessary for us then to be filled with the unifying Spirit, that we may practically live and serve as fellow members of our glorified Lord.

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Again, the Holy Spirit is the inspirer of all faithfulness (2 Cor. 5: 19; 2 Tim. 1: 14) and encouragement (Acts 13: 52; 1 Pet. 4: 14). One of the greatest needs in Christian service is the power to be faithful. So much unseen and unapplauded work needs to be done by the majority of Christian workers, and there is such strong temptation to a careless dealing with details which do not seem to be of much importance, and yet which really are, that only the Holy Spirit's continual enduement can make us faithful and enable us to "keep that which is committed unto us." It has been well said that although a little thing *is* a little thing, yet faithfulness in a little thing is a great thing, and, we would add, demands a great power from on high. The fullness of the Spirit is the power adequate for the doing of little things on high levels, and for making ordinary duties shine with the light of the extraordinary devotion applied to them. The stress also of Christian service, the deadening influences of the indifferentism of the present age, the frequent bitter rejection of the Word of Life by those to whom we bring it, and the subtle powers of the adversary to depress the soul, all combine to discourage and turn aside those who honestly seek to serve Christ, and many lose heart and slacken effort altogether. How great need then is there for the Holy Spirit's ministry of encouragement. He alone can give joy and inspiration when the sun is

obscured by the dark clouds of disappointment. He alone in that same hour can enable us to "look not at the things that are seen," but at Him Whose is the service and the government. The story of the fire in the interpreter's house which blazed brightly in spite of the water poured upon it, because it was all the time being fed with oil from behind, is a true picture of the counteracting work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the one who is exposed to discouraging influences in service. This alone is the secret of true and unchanging optimism, and of rejoicing even in the pathway of hard and seemingly barren toil,—to be filled with Him Whose purpose it is to cause us to walk and work even as He did who "endured the contradiction of sinners."

One further word, all-embracing in its character and scope, as to personal need in all service of the Spirit's fullness. All real service is but the effluence of the Holy Spirit through yielded and filled lives (John 7 : 37-39).

It is not the outflow of energy, zeal, wisdom, or eloquence which quickens and blesses men, but the flowing to them of the Spirit Who alone convicts and converts. Hence all work without Him, though it may sound and seem well, is really worth nothing. This is the Divine plan, that lives yielded to Christ may become channels—often hidden channels—through whom the Spirit shall pour forth in a stream of blessing to a dying world. Then

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indeed, "everything shall live whither the river cometh" (Ezek. 47 : 9), and the worker becomes one who merely "ministers the Spirit" (Gal. 3 : 5), Who thus ministered, carries on His own gracious work in the hearts and lives of men.

Such brief consideration of the need of the power of the Holy Spirit in the pathway of service, only emphasizes the utter folly of working on without His conscious presence, and indeed the utter sin of a passive neglect of the enduement by which our lives can be made so infinitely more fruitful in blessing to others than is ever possible without Him. In view of the potentiality of an empowered life and the glory it may bring to the Redeemer in the blessing of those for whom He died, what deterring consideration as to the price of power should for a moment be allowed to weigh with us? Oh that His word might be burned into our souls until we "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge" of its fulfillment;—"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

"It is enough for
the disciples that he
be as his master"—
MATT. 10 : 25.

V

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

THE aim of the chapters immediately preceding this one has been to show, by a consideration of the work of the Holy Spirit, the need of His indwelling power on the part of every believer, and the insufficiency of every human resource apart from Him. The life to which God calls us, and the service which He expects, has been described as a reproduction in us of the life and labor of Jesus Christ, made possible to us only by the Holy Spirit, in Whose power our Lord lived His human life. In that life Christ revealed not only the Father but the Spirit also; for until He came, upon Whom the Spirit descended and *abode*, the only extant knowledge of the Spirit was in His transient enduement of certain men in the Old Testament and in the prophetic statements concerning the promised Messiah. A brief study therefore, of our Lord's relationship to the Holy Spirit will deepen our sense of need, and thus prove

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a means of real blessing in sending us to the Throne with the prayer of faith which claims and receives the Holy Anointing. In the Spiritual as in the natural world there is a law which teaches that the same cause will, under the same conditions, produce the same consequence. Hence under the same conditions of surrender and dependence as in which our Lord lived His earthly life, the same cause—the Eternal Spirit—will produce the same consequence, and our lives can thus be like His life (in kind though not in degree), in the reality and beauty of holiness. There is a very clear and striking analogy between the life of the Lord and the lives of His people, but it is an analogy which needs to be recognized as existing not only in the outward walk but also in the inward enduement, if its force is to be known experimentally. Consider then, Christ's relationship to the Holy Spirit.—

He was born of the Spirit (Matt. 1 : 18-20) and thus entered upon His earthly life. The Incarnation is the profoundest of all mysteries, and the miracle in which all other miracles are hid, but it is not our immediate concern to discuss it here. Suffice it now to note that this analogy between Christ and His followers begins thus at the beginning of all things. It was by being born of the Holy Spirit that the Son of God became a Son of Man, and it is likewise by being born of the Holy

Spirit that the sons of man become the sons of God (John 3 : 3). All spiritual life commences here ; but as all life must be progressive if it be maintained at all, so with those who are " born from above." The new birth is but the first operation of the Spirit in the soul and the forerunner of much greater things. Yet how many rest satisfied with this primary experience, and not following the steps of Him Who has " left us an example," never know all the fullness of that same Spirit, but remain in almost perpetual spiritual babyhood (1 Cor. 3 : 1-2).

The Lord Jesus lived a quiet and for the greater part unrecorded life in the power of the Spirit for thirty years, during which time without doubt He underwent much of the discipline of the Spirit, learning many lessons (as a man), and as His subsequent public life certainly showed, being instructed in the Scriptures and weaving them into His very life by the Spirit's power. Those years were all of wonderful preparatory value to Him, fitting Him for the work He was to assume when the time was fully come, and fitting Him moreover to enter into sympathy with the common lives of His followers in rare degree. How great is our need of this disciplinary and preparatory work of the Holy Spirit if we are to do the same work in the same way as He did !

Then at the close of the thirty years' retirement,

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when the full time was come for His manifestation He was baptized with the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3: 13-17).

As He went down into the Jordan, identifying Himself with fallen man in the place of repentance, thus fulfilling all righteousness, the heavens opened, the Spirit descended upon Him, and the voice attested Him as God's beloved Son. Hitherto He was the Son of God. Henceforth He is the Son of God openly manifested. This was the anointing for His future work, the anointing of the Prophet, the Priest, and the King, of which all the ceremonial anointing of Levitical ordinance was but a type. Thus He entered upon His threefold ministry, and if it was necessary for Him so to be endued ere He commenced the work committed to Him, how much more is it necessary for His disciples? What was indispensable to the Master of the house, is surely indispensable to those who are of His household. In an illuminative word in the mouth of John the Baptist (John 1: 33), this descent of the Spirit upon the Lord Jesus is linked with His work of baptizing His followers with the same Spirit; pointing forward to the office of the now ascended and glorified Lord Who gives the endowment of His own earthly life to those who are His, and assuring us of Divine provision in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for the accomplishment of the Divine plan in our lives. To briefly express

the analogy—Christ's earthly life began at the Incarnation, and His service at the baptism in Jordan. Our spiritual life begins when we are born of the Spirit, and our service when we are filled with the Spirit.

He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (Matt. 4: 1), and it is significant also to notice that, when the temptation was ended, He "returneth in the power of the Spirit" (Luke 4: 14). Thus the whole account of Christ's temptation is bounded by distinct statements of His intimate relationship with, and dependence upon the Holy Spirit. This was the secret of His victory, and is in like manner the secret of ours; for never let it be forgotten that temptation is a very large fact and factor in the life of a Spirit-filled Christian, and victory is only possible by the indwelling Spirit. To be conquerors we must ourselves be completely controlled, and this we see in Christ's temptation. Each Satanic suggestion was an attempt to draw Jesus away from the position of Divine Sonship so recently attested at His baptism, and is indeed a type of all the temptation which assails His followers, for this is the enemy's design in every onslaught. Christ's answer in each case was but a reassertion of the principles of sonship,—dependence, obedience, and fidelity—each showing how completely He was controlled by the Spirit. It is only in this same attitude that we can overcome,

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and this attitude is only continually maintained as we are in like manner controlled by the same Spirit.

Almost immediately after His return from the desert, in the synagogue of Nazareth, He testified that He was anointed by the Spirit to preach and to heal (Luke 4 : 18-19 ; Acts 10 : 38), and from that time His life was filled with the service to which He had been sent. Having announced His mission and the power of the Spirit in which He undertook it, He did not speak much about the Spirit until towards the close of His life, but just went on working and teaching under the Anointing, "doing good, for God was with Him." It was as though He would show to His disciples what are the manifestations of a holy life before revealing fully to them, the One by whose enabling power they too could be holy, thus at the same time creating in them, both fervent desire and true knowledge of self's insufficiency.

He did however, make it quite clear that His works of healing were done by the Spirit (Matt. 12 : 28), and it is also abundantly evident that in the midst of His toil the ever-present Spirit was the encourager of His heart, for "*Jesus rejoiced by the Holy Spirit*" (Luke 10 : 21, R. v., marg.) when the report of His disciples' work reached Him.

As had been foretold by Isaiah (11 : 2) the

Spirit was His wisdom, for His commandments to the apostles were given "*through the Holy Ghost*" (Acts 1 : 2). Again, we do well to question ourselves here as to our so much greater need of the Spirit for wisdom in the service of God than His could have been.

Indeed, His whole life and its culminating sacrifice on Calvary was the direct outcome of the Holy Spirit's fullness, for it was "*through the Eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God*" (Heb. 9 : 14). Here then for His followers is the secret of a poured-out life, a life lived for the blessing of others, and a life which has the same results of fruitfulness which ever follow the falling into the ground of a corn of wheat. But to so live "without the camp" necessitates the inflow of life which is only realized "within the veil" by those who are willing both for the conditions and the consequence.

"As My Father hath
sent Me, even so send I
you."—JOHN 20 : 21.

VI

IDENTIFICATION, CHRIST AND HIS FOLLOWERS

AT the close of the earthly life already briefly considered, having exhibited to His followers the example of His own character and mission, and having already promised the advent of the "other Comforter," Whose mission to them and to the world through them He had outlined (John 14-16), the Lord Jesus in one grand message after His resurrection united for all time His disciples with Himself. "*As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this He breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost*" (John 20 : 21-22).

Now this word of His expresses a threefold identity between the believer and his Lord in character, in mission, and in power; an identity which we must set before us as the constructive ideal of our lives if they are ever to approximate to His expectation of us.

I. Identity of character which has already been

pointed out as being of supreme importance in view of the fact that the world is shaping its opinions of Christ mainly from what it sees of Him in our lives. To be like Him is our best contribution to the extension of the Kingdom of God upon earth, and our highest service to humanity. For he most surely blesses and helps his fellows who translates the promises of God into actual holiness of life, and manifests His reality before them in such a way as to make Him desirable. As it is only by the use of a prism of glass that the primary colors which compose the sunlight can be seen, so it is only by means of the lives of His people that the world can ever discern His beauty and saving power.

And this identity of character is confirmed by a remarkable sevenfold identity of title in which Christ and His followers are variously designated by the same illustrative names.

He is the Son of God (Gal. 4 : 4).

They are the sons of God (Gal. 4 : 5).

He is the Servant of God (Isa. 42 : 1).

They are servants of God (Rom. 6 : 22).

He is the Witness (Isa. 55 : 4).

They are witnesses (Acts 1 : 8).

He is the Light of the World (John 8 : 12).

They are the light of the world (Matt. 5 : 14).

He is the High Priest (Heb. 3 : 1).

They are priests unto God (Rev. 1 : 6).

He is the Lamb (John 1 : 29).

They are lambs (Luke 10 : 3).

He is the Branch (Zech. 6 : 12).

They are branches (John 15 : 5).

This unfolding of the necessary correspondence between His life and ours,—in the filial love of sons, the obedience of servants, the faithfulness of witnesses, the altruism of light bearers, the intercession of priests, the gentleness of lambs, and the dependence of branches,—is but an expansion of His word “even so.” And how quick are men to recognize this Christlikeness where it exists! I once passed a group of work-girls in a crowded London street and was surprised at the sweet perfumes which exhaled from them. On enquiry I found that they were employed in a perfume factory, and had just come from their work of bottling the sweet essences. The odors in which they had all day been laboring clung to their garments, and all unconsciously to themselves, they came out to shed abroad a sweet fragrance in the dusty highway and to remind at least one passer-by of far distant fields and gardens of beauty and delight and to make him desire them exceedingly. And it seemed to me that in that simple incident I found an interpretation of this His word. For as He came forth from the Father's presence fragrant with His love, we too must go forth into the world characterized always by such a sweet savor of

Christ as shall induce men to seek closer acquaintance with Him Who is its Divine Source.

II. Identity of mission. It is possible by philosophical analysis to separate the light and heat rays in the sunbeam, but in actual fact they cannot be dissevered. So while for the purpose of this study we are able to think of the life of Christ apart from His service, in reality they are but His one interpretation of God to the world. His service was what it was just because He Himself was what He was,—“The life was the light of men.”

We have already seen in a previous chapter what are some of the constituent elements of true Christian service, but we have to turn again to Christ to find their embodiment and application, for His work alike with His life is the pattern of ours. And the identity of mission in which His Word comprehends us, means that as He was sent forth, separated unto a holy purpose for the fulfillment of which He lived and died, so we too are sent to carry on His work, to seek and save the lost, to minister unto the needs of mankind, to call sinners to repentance, and to glorify the Father irrespective of all personal cost and consequence. He lived for sinners, and then died for them for only so could the Father's purpose be effected. And we are committed to the same pathway, and for us as for Him the only road along which we can bring

blessing to men leads round by way of the green hill which is outside the city wall, and through the garden wherein is a new tomb.

III. Identity of enduement. It is not difficult to imagine how these words fell upon the ears of those to whom they were first spoken, heavy as their hearts then were with the memory of recent failure. The task of living and working as they had seen Him do, never seemed such an utter impossibility, as when in that moment He expressed it so unmistakably as being His will for them. But then it was that He drew aside, as it were, the veil that had always hidden from them in a certain degree His inner life, and announced that the power of His life should be also the power for theirs. "*He breathed on them and saith 'receive ye the Holy Ghost.'*" Thus is the impossible made possible in prospect, and actual in retrospect.

And this identity of character and mission to which we are committed, is only possible of realization by a conditioning identity of power, which this His Word, combines with the command. Regarding His own enduement it is said (John 3 : 34), "*He Whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God, for God giveth not The Spirit by measure unto Him.*" Unmeasured fullness was the portion of the sent Saviour, and is to be the portion of the sent servant also. And this word is of deep and significant import to us, disarming as it does all our

faithless fears as to the impossibility of reaching the standard. I have in my possession a portable electric lamp in which the storage battery needs constant renewal as the measured supply of electricity is used up. And I have also on my desk another lamp which is connected with the main-cable, and for which there is consequently available an unmeasured supply of electricity. On this account it can always respond to the demands which are made upon it, and is hence constantly used. The difference between the two lamps is illustrative of the inadequacy of anything less than our entire oneness with the Saviour in the power of His life. His demands are overwhelming were they not linked to the glorious promise-command, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost,*" and rendered possible of obedience by the power of Omnipotent sufficiency.

Paradoxical though it seems, this word which sends us forth in the threefold identity noted, at the same time binds us into closest fellowship with our Lord. Of His own life He declared "*He that sent Me is with Me,*" and to His disciples He said, "*Go, . . . and lo I am with you.*" Thus our going forth is even as was His, a going *with* rather than *for* Him, a partnership of power indeed, if we are willing to pay its price.

From the glory and the gladness
From His secret place,

From the rapture of His presence,
From the sunshine of His Face ;
Christ the Son of God hath sent me
Through the midnight lands,
Mine the mighty ordination
Of the pierced Hands.

**"Now concerning
spiritual gifts."—1 COR.
12:1.**

VII

THE GIFT AND THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the foregoing chapters we have seen how that the Holy Spirit is given to believers upon the simple terms of surrender and faith, to be in them a perpetual enduement for life and labor, to reproduce in them the life of Christ, and to reënact through them His works. There are however many who while realizing these facts are nevertheless disappointed in their own experience; for having accepted the Holy Spirit as God's great gift, and walking up to the fullest measure of the light which He bestows on them, they do not find a great acquisition of power in their lives, nor do they ever seem to reach the high levels of service upon which they see other lives are lived. Many in such circumstances are tempted to think that in some manner they have been self-deceived as to their actual reception of the Spirit, or to doubt the fulfillment of God's promises entirely, and thus, getting out of touch with the Spirit by definite or indefinite unbelief, become thoroughly dissatisfied and despond-

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ent. How many in such a case have we not met? Now very often the source of such disappointment is to be found in a lack of discernment between the Person and the power, between the Gift and the gifts of the Spirit. It has already been pointed out more than once that the chief work of the Holy Spirit is to make men holy, hence the truest evidence of the exertion of His power in any life is seen in the realm of character. This, however, is to a large extent lost sight of, and the popular idea of the power of the Spirit identifies it only with ability to preach, or to teach, or to engage in some prominent service in the kingdom of God. Thus many by their own preconceptions are unable to recognize the work and influence of the Spirit in other and far more important directions in their lives. What a man is, is of supreme significance, far beyond the importance of what he does; therefore the truest evidence of the Spirit's indwelling is not gift but grace. Let it not be forgotten however, that to every believer who, recognizing his privilege, receives the Holy Spirit, He will be the power for witnessing to Christ (Acts 1: 8). The promise "*When He is come unto you He shall glorify Me.*" (John 16: 13-14) is of universal application in the Church of God, and one has never yet met a Spirit-filled believer who was not witnessing in His power to the reality of the Lord Jesus both by life and lip.

There are however special gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon men, singling them out in this way for special service; and it is by failing to recognize this that many who cannot see any approximation in their own witness to that of such Spirit-gifted souls are brought into an unsettled and often into an unbelieving state. To help such to a right understanding of this difficult matter is the aim of this present consideration.

There is in 1 Cor. 12: 4-10 an explicit statement as to the nature and purpose of these special gifts of the Spirit. Each one is given as an endowment for the particular service to which the recipient is called by God. Hence while it is said that "*to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues*" (1 Cor. 12: 8-10), it is also made clear that those so endued bear the relationship to one another of members in the same body, each performing his own function, and none more necessary than another (5: 12-22). Thus we can see a threefold principle in such gifts.

(1) The possibility of having the Spirit without having a distinguishing gift of the Spirit. And

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this fact is most clearly seen from the Divinely-used figure of the body and the members. It is unnecessary for every member to have the gift of speech, and likewise unnecessary that every member should possess the other gifts; but it is necessary that every member shares the same life. Hence every Spirit-possessed believer is endued, apart from all gifts which distinguish one above another, to perform his own appointed function in the work of the body. "*Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular*" (1 Cor. 12: 27). It is not uniformity of gift and service which the Spirit gives, but unity of life and obedience.

(2) The adaptation of the manifested character of the Spirit's enduement to the needs of the service, which accounts for the diversity in the capacity of Christians equally yielded and filled with the Holy Spirit, to accomplish the same kind of service. How frequently it happens that one who by the Spirit preaches mightily is sadly deficient in the administrative qualities necessary in God's work, and vice versa. How frequently also do we meet those who, while quite unable to speak with any degree of force or clearness, are yet wonderfully equipped for the costly and much-to-be-desired work of intercession. Thus it is impossible to compare the relative values of the gifts of the Spirit, and impossible also, if we are truly yielded to Him, to be dissatisfied with the gift bestowed on

us as compared with the enduement of another. This leads again to the record of what has increasingly become deep conviction, that to every one who receives Him the Spirit gives *some* gift, though to very many it is not one which at all distinguishes them from their fellows. It is however, in every case the exact enduement necessary for the particular service enjoined. This leads of necessity to the recognition of the further principle —

(3) The absolute sovereignty of the Holy Spirit in the bestowal of gifts. He sets every member in the body "*as it hath pleased Him*" (1 Cor. 12: 18), and having thus appointed to each his place He bestows His power, "*dividing to every man severally as He will*" (1 Cor. 12: 11). There is a wonderful unity in all He does, and in thus fitting each one for his particular work He is completing a Divine plan for the world's blessing and the Redeemer's glory. And irrespective of all personal considerations as to the nature of place and power, here is the strongest possible incentive to individual faithfulness and obedience. For the quota of service on the part of each one, is carrying out in some measure, the value of which He has already determined, God's great plan. In just the measure of our faithfulness we are coöperating with Him, but in just the measure of our unfaithfulness we are "frustrating the grace of God."

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Before leaving this subject there is a delicate question which can only be touched upon with light hand—the separability of the gifts from the graces of the Spirit. We have known men who have had great power, chiefly in preaching, whose gift lifted them high in the outward Church and whose work was to all appearance blessed by God, and yet whose lives were far from exhibiting corresponding grace, and were often indeed not far removed from the scandalous. Such cases have long puzzled many, nor can I pretend here to offer any solution to the enigma, except to point afresh to the utter sovereignty of the Spirit in His choice of those upon whom He bestows gifts, and to again distinguish between the Person and the power. It cannot be without tremendous loss to themselves, both now and beyond, that such men work, and to us they are alike a warning and yet an encouragement. Samson was used in his spiritual decadence to execute God's judgment upon the Philistines, but it cost him his own life. Let us seek for ourselves a continual fullness of the Spirit Himself, let our work be the overflow of our life, and let us be content with such gift as He bestows, seeking to trade with our talent, for "*the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal*" (1 Cor. 12: 7).

It must carefully be borne in mind by those who are seeking the fullness of the Holy Spirit that His

endowment is simply the power to do the will of God, nothing more than this and nothing less. If along the line of that Will for you there is the public ministry of preaching the Word, then there will be adequate power for that service. If on the other hand, His Will for you is the secret sanctuary-service of prayer, or the commonplace duty of visitation, or the humdrum business of organization, or the seemingly secular appointment of domestic or commercial life, it is for that work you will be endued and not for other service which is allotted to your brother. To sum up this entire consideration in brief,—seek to be filled with the Spirit by an act of faith, then follow the guidance and submit to the government of the Spirit by an attitude of obedience, and in so doing you will receive just that gift which is necessary in order that you may fulfill His purpose. Then take your eyes off your fellow servants, and keep them (always in calm reliance on the indwelling Spirit) fixed upon your Lord, from Whom will continuously come the needed direction as to your part in His service and the assurance of the needed gifts in the Gift Himself. For let it not be forgotten that above and before all special gifts for special work is the indwelling of the Spirit for the ordinary work of living under the lordship of Christ (1 Cor. 12 : 3), and this is all-comprehensive, for this is the true pathway to the glory of God (Phil. 2 : 11).

"That your prayers be
not hindered."—1 PET.
3 : 7.

VIII

HINDRANCES TO POWER

It is no uncommon experience to meet those whose prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit seems to receive no answer, and who seem unable to realize that fullness of His power which they know to be entirely necessary to their own lives and evidently possible to others. Such souls are often keenly sensible of their need and very earnest in their desires. They pray and strive to enter into the life which they see is God's plan for them, but disappointment seems always to attend them, and despair very often settles upon them. What is the cause of such a state? Why is the power of the Spirit not theirs? Where is the hindrance? It is the aim of this chapter to point out some of the most frequent causes of hindrance, which though often small in themselves, are yet of sufficient magnitude to thwart the Divine purpose, and to make it impossible for God consistently with His own righteousness to answer prayer for the fullness of the Spirit.

(1) Unwillingness to renounce all known sin,—for "*if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*" (Ps. 66 : 18). Here is the clearly-defined condition of *all* answered prayer, that it is offered from a true heart, which is willing

to submit entirely to God's judgment as to the righteous and the unrighteous things in life, and to act upon it. The Spirit of God is essentially the *Holy Spirit*, Who cannot enter into fellowship with the unholy or the unclean. Hence there must be a relinquishment, honest and entire in its character, of all that the Word of God in conjunction with conscience condemns. Any controversy in this matter means unanswered prayer. A great difficulty with many is that they want power without purity, and happiness without holiness. When God puts His finger upon unclean and unlawful things they shrink from the cost of renouncing them, and thus make it impossible for their prayer to be answered. There are in most lives mountains to be levelled, valleys to be exalted, crooked things to be made straight, and rough places to be made plain before the glory of the Lord can be revealed, and it is just here that so many fail. This renunciation of what is revealed as iniquity, often means a very serious matter,—involving changes in many realms of life; possibly touching the sphere of the affections or the possessions, the inner habits of life or the outward details of conduct. But it is a much more serious thing to continue a controversy with God and to thus prevent the Holy Spirit possessing His own temple. It is an actual impossibility to receive the Holy Spirit while grasping anything that God has banned and conscience has

already judged. The hand of faith must be empty in order to receive the gift.

(2) Unreality in consecration and surrender. "*When thou vowest a vow unto God defer not to pay it*" (Eccl. 5 : 4). "*Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts . . . Should I be enquired of at all by them ?*" (Ezek. 14 : 3). The Holy Spirit only possesses the soul as far as the soul is yielded to God, and if any "part of the price" is kept back He is thereby thwarted. It is one thing to profess "my all is on the altar," but another thing altogether to place all there without any reservation ; and it is in this that very many fail to fulfill the simple condition which governs the Spirit's incoming. They are willing for God to take very much of their lives, almost all, in fact ; but like Saul, they "spare the best of the sheep and oxen"—some precious thing for their own use and joy ; and that one thing withheld from God nullifies their whole professed surrender. There must be along with the prayer for the Holy Spirit's fullness an honest and unreserved recognition that "ye are not your own," for, The Holy Ghost is not given when Jesus is not glorified (John 7 : 39), and He is not Lord *at all* if He is not Lord *of all*. Until the crucified Messiah has become the crowned Master upon the throne of the heart, the power of the Holy Spirit cannot be known. His enthronement conditions our endue-

ment. And this must be so, because power necessitates control, and complete control is impossible where there is incomplete consecration.

(3) Impurity of motive. "*Ye ask and have not, because ye ask amiss that ye may consume it upon your desires*" (James 4 : 3). This is one of the most powerful hindrances, just as it is one of the most difficult to deal with. It is probable that many find it impossible to realize the Holy Spirit's power just because mixed with their prayer is the desire for the personal prominence to which they imagine they will themselves be raised by His anointing. Others wish for great preaching power, the ability to become "front rank men," the magnetic influence to draw crowds to their ministry, or the reputation which will secure for them high places in church and world ; and hence these "ask and have not" because they would indeed "consume it upon their lusts." Others selfishly seek His fullness for the sake of enjoying an ebbless tide of joy and peace and ecstasy ; but the Holy Spirit is given solely for the glory of Jesus in the life and service of His disciples, and never for any glory or merely personal benefit to them. He never comes in order to exalt any man but "the Man Christ Jesus," nor to extend any church or sect but "the Church of the First-born." Hence if personal or sectarian aggrandizement in any degree prompts the prayer, it at the same time fore-

dooms it. The Holy Anointing Oil is never poured upon man's flesh (Ex. 30 : 32). On the other hand, let there be an intense desire that Christ may be magnified for His own sake, a longing that the life may be poured out for the salvation of the lost, and a glad willingness to be made invisible by the investiture—and the answer to the prayer inspired by such motive will not be long delayed. When the Lord is sought, and the Messenger of the Covenant is delighted in, He will "*suddenly come to His temple*" (Mal. 3 : 1).

(4) Disobedience to already-given light,—for God gives the Holy Ghost "to them that obey Him" (Acts 5 : 32). There can be no bestowal of the Holy Spirit where there is an unwillingness to obey God in any matter about which He has already made His will known. There are in many lives questions of long standing about which conscience has often been troubled, but with regard to which the heart has been disobedient to the Heavenly Vision. These are the hindrances which make all prayer for the Spirit's power non-effective, and until they are willingly dealt with, and the long-deferred obedience yielded, His fullness will never be received. It often happens that when souls are eagerly seeking this blessing from pure motives, there are revealed to them hitherto hidden acts and attitudes of disobedience, sometimes trifling in themselves, and about these points the whole

controversy rages. Obedience then may mean a thorough revision of relationship towards others, the leaving of the gift before the altar, and the going out along the pathway of bitter humiliation to be reconciled to the brother who has somewhat against us. It has meant to not a few, very definite acts of restitution to those who have been wronged by them in past time ; and to others an overturning of much that has been built up in disobedience, and the reversal of the direction of the whole walk of life. The fact is that many lives have become by continued disobedience in some one thing entirely out of adjustment with God, and until such adjustment is voluntarily made they are straitened in themselves. But let it not be imagined that these things are here noted in order to induce any degree of merely morbid self-introspection, but rather to influence the bringing of the manifestly unfilled life into the clear searchlight of God's presence, that He may show what doth hinder. To the man who seeks the secret place and there pours out his soul in honest desire, "Lord, show me anything at all in my life which prevents Thee filling me to the fullest possible extent with Thy power, for Thy glory," there is an infallible test as to whether the hindrance of whose existence he becomes conscious is merely self-imagined or God-shown. If to such an one the same thing rises up again and again to condemn him when he is nearest

to the Lord in prayer and hence in clearest light, be assured that it is just that thing which must be faithfully dealt with before the longing desire of his heart for God's power can ever be satisfied. "*If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off ; if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out.*"

(5) Ignorance of God's way of faith, for "*Christ hath redeemed us . . . that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith*" (Gal. 3: 13-14).

This is the great hindrance in the lives of many to whom the foregoing hindrances do not apply. There are those who long to be filled, and are willing for anything that shall bring glory to God in their lives, and who yet fail to realize the fulfillment of the promise just because they fail to understand its simple definite reception by faith. They pray and seek as it seems to little purpose, and it is among such that very bitter discouragement and disappointment are often found. But the secret of much of their disappointment is to be sought in an entire misconception of the true nature of prayer. Prayer is not the forcible overcoming of Divine reluctance, but the believing appropriation of the Divine willingness to bless. If we have any desire for His power, our desire is not original but merely responsive to His desire, and hence we make a profound mistake in constantly praying for what God has already given, and in continuing to *ask* when God would have us *take*. Such prayer is

not the voice of faith, however earnest it may be, but rather is it the expression of unsuspected unbelief, and on this account many receive apparently no answer. "Christ redeemed us . . . that we might receive the promise of the Spirit *by faith*" (Gal. 3: 14, 15), and hence nothing but the appropriation of faith will fulfill in us this great purpose of Christ's redemptive work. There is a moment when desire must cease to ask and faith must begin to take, and when prayer merges into appropriation. And here is a simple and clear analogy with the reception of the first great gift of eternal life in Christ. A soul convinced of need is not saved by continuing to *ask* for salvation, but in an act of faith by taking the offered gift—"as many as *received* Him" (John 1: 12). So it is with the second great gift of the Holy Spirit. He is received by a similar definite act of faith, which many failing to understand, are urged into struggling activity to gain—and all in vain. Let such cease their efforts, remembering that the Holy Spirit is to be obtained and not attained; and that an abiding experience of His all-sufficient power is not the response of God to their wrestling, long praying, or any similar effort, but to their simple faith. Let them take their stand upon the Promise, and in obedience and faith claim its fulfillment in the Name of Jesus, and they shall find that "faithful is He that promised, Who also will do it."

"Be filled with the Spirit."—EPH. 5: 18.

IX

THE SECRET OF POWER

PREVIOUS chapters have demonstrated the necessity of a personal reception of the Holy Spirit as the only adequate power for Christian life and service, and the immediately preceding one has pointed out some of the hindrances which prevent the inflow of the Spirit and render all prayer for His power inoperative and powerless. There now remains the very practical and pertinent consideration as to how a Christian, realizing his need and recognizing God's promises, may definitely be filled with the Spirit. At the outset let it be noted that there is a twofold meaning attached to that term, the right understanding of which may prove helpful. There is an initial filling and there is a continuous filling, the one being the necessary complement of the other. Nowhere in the Scriptures is there promised a personal filling with the Spirit which shall be in any sense final, and it is only as a crisis of appropriation which leads to a daily process of renewal that we are called to "be filled." Thus it is in the sense of a definite act which inaugurates a maintained attitude that the reception of the Spirit by faith is throughout insisted upon; and it must be borne in mind that His fullness is always

limited by present personal capacity, which continually increases as He is allowed to guide and control our lives.

Nothing has been so obscured by the adversary as the simplicity of God's great gift of the Spirit to His people,—and with intent, for the man who is "filled with the Spirit" is empowered for a service which must materially injure the kingdom of darkness. Hence many earnest souls are kept back from obtaining all that is rightly theirs in Christ, being befogged by a variety of questionings and reasonings and apparently contradictory teachings on the subject, whereas indeed

"If our faith were but more simple
We should take Him at His Word,"

just as we did when the gift sought was the gift of Eternal Life in Jesus Christ. For to repeat what has already been pointed out, the gift of the Holy Spirit is an integral part of the plan of salvation, so that it is to the same Lord we come for the second gift as for the first, and in the same way. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the power of the Spirit is not something apart from Christ, but in Him. He is the repository of all power, and in seeking His fullness we are but seeking to know experimentally what is already ours potentially under the Covenant of Grace, and thus to really possess our possessions. The attitude of

blessing therefore for seeking souls, is to deal as simply with the promise of power as already they have done with the promise of pardon. There is a very striking analogy between the terms used to describe the gift of Eternal Life and those used to describe the gift of the Holy Spirit, pointing to the fact of their equal simplicity of reception.

"The promise of life
which is in Christ"
(2 Tim. 1: 1).

"Life through His
Name" (John
20: 31).

"Peace to them that
are afar off" (Eph.
2: 17).

"The Gift of God is
eternal life" (Rom.
6: 23).

"God sent forth His
Son" (Gal. 4: 4).

Invitation to sinners:
"Come unto Me"
(Matt. 11: 28).

"By grace ye are saved
through faith" (Eph.
2: 8).

Salvation: "To them
that obey Him"
(Heb. 5: 9).

"The Promise of the
Father" (Acts 1: 4).

"The Holy Ghost
whom the Father will
send in My Name"
(John 14: 26).

"The promise is to
them that are afar
off" (Acts 2: 39).

"The Gift of the Holy
Ghost" (Acts 2: 38).

"God sent forth the
Spirit of His Son"
(Gal. 4: 6).

Invitation to believers:
"Come unto Me"
(John 7: 37).

"The promise of the
Spirit through faith"
(Gal. 3: 14).

The Holy Ghost given
"to them that obey
Him" (Acts 5: 32).

And this analogy of terms manifests a still deeper analogy between the giving and the receiving of the twofold gift. Both are God's covenanted promises, both are in the Name of Jesus, both are of universal application, and both are received upon the simple terms of faith and obedience. If believers would but as definitely accept the gift of the Spirit as they definitely accepted Christ at conversion—by faith without feeling,—and would continue in that same attitude of faith without intermission, how wonderfully would lives be “changed from glory unto glory by the Lord the Spirit!” (2 Cor. 3 : 18).

Now to any seeking 'soul there are five simple steps which, if honestly taken by one who is prepared to go all lengths with God, will prove as the pathway to a personal Pentecost, and as the payment of the price of power.

(1) Confess past failure and present condition.—This cannot be hurriedly slurred over, for it involves not only the admission of sinful and unlawful things hitherto allowed in the life, but also the forsaking of them (Prov. 28 : 13). It means also a humbling acknowledgment of failure in respect of claiming the promises of God as the cause of the unsatisfactory state of life, and it also necessitates a putting of all the past by faith under the Cleansing Blood (1 John 1 : 7-9).

The past thus dealt with there must be an honest

confession of present need. Just as it is not until a man confesses his lost state that he can receive Christ as his Saviour, so likewise it is only the man who honestly confesses "I am not filled with the Holy Spirit" who can ever receive the Holy Spirit in fullness. Unadmitted need has no claim upon God.

(2) Yield to God the whole life. This is a practical acknowledgment of God's claim to possess those who are redeemed by the Precious Blood of Christ. We are His—spirit, soul and body—purchased at the Cross; but much of the unsatisfactoriness of life in the past has been due to the fact that we have not allowed His rule, and have lived as though our lives were our own. There must then be a definite correction of attitude towards Him by a yielding of ourselves without reservation, for the outcome of "I believe" cannot be other than "I belong." We are His by sovereign right, and to yield to His ownership and control is but our "reasonable service" (Rom. 12 : 1). Let this step then be taken in all honesty of heart: let us present ourselves before Him with all we are and have: let nothing be withheld, and in that same moment He accepts us, saying—"I have redeemed thee, thou art Mine."

(3) Claim the promise of the Holy Spirit. Now we are on the ground where we may not only ask, but claim. In the deepest sense the gift of the

Spirit is now our right under the Covenant; and in the same way as a man claims from a banker the amount written upon the cheque which he presents, faith must claim the present fulfillment of God's purpose. . . . "*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you*" (John 16: 23). There can then be no question as to God's willingness to fill His people with His Spirit, for the Cross seals to them the promise which is their birthright portion, and He who has taught us our need knows the impossibility of our living aright apart from His enduement. Often we have heard such a prayer as "Lord, if it be Thy will fill me with Thy Spirit"; whereas nothing could be more clearly expressed in His Word than that this is already His will. To pray in this fashion then is but to ignore "the exceeding great and precious promises," and indeed savors strongly of unbelief. God is only honored when He is trusted. Hence when entirely yielded to Him, the soul must claim and take by faith the "Promise of the Father."

I take the promised Holy Ghost,
I take the gift of Pentecost,
To fill me to the uttermost,
I take: He undertakes.

(4) Reckon that God fulfills His Word. If the former step of claiming is faith in action, this fur-

ther step of reckoning is faith at rest. But just here so many lose their way, and because of an absence of feelings and conscious realization of the fulfilled promise, are often tempted to conclude either that the whole promise is a delusion, or that they have failed to confess, yield, or claim in the right way. Now to such there is but one message—Believe God. Just as at conversion the soul rests upon God's faithfulness to forgive and to receive, so now, apart from anything in the nature of emotional consciousness, He must be trusted to make good His word. Reckoning that the promise is fulfilled, the soul must now step out to do the next obvious duty and to face the next difficulty in life or service, expecting that the Holy Spirit's power will be manifested.

Nothing behind, nothing before,
The steps of faith fall on a seeming void,
And find a rock beneath.

And in this matter it is the experience of many who have sounded God's faithfulness to deepest depths, that the infilling of the Holy Spirit is invariably accompanied by a humbling sense of human weakness, and with the Master Himself the Spirit-filled disciple can only say, "I can of mine own self do nothing."

And this simple act of faith which secures and seals the promise, leads to the last step in this scale

of ascending purpose and power, the final and unchanging attitude of the Spirit-filled life.

(5) Obey implicitly the known will of God. It has been already pointed out that the Holy Spirit is bestowed to make the doing of the will of God possible to us, and hence by simple deduction it follows that any willful departure from the Divine will involves a loss of the endowment. The prayer of the Spirit-controlled heart is ever—"Lord, what wilt Thou?" and the action of entire obedience is always towards coöperation with the indwelling Spirit. This is absolutely essential, both with regard to our own lives and to the calls of service which come to every one so filled, if the power is to be maintained. And each act of obedience enlarges the capacity for reception, and each step of faith leads into a still larger room—from grace to grace, from strength to strength, from glory to glory.

One word remains to be added here to what has been said above as to steps which lead to the personal filling of the Spirit. There is a real difficulty to some connected not with the filling, but with the necessary emptying of self, and it must be pointed out that nowhere in the Word of God is self-emptying laid upon us as a condition of receiving the gift of the Spirit. Further, it is as impossible for self to accomplish the emptying as to attain the fullness. There are two ways in which a glass

containing air may be emptied. The air may be exhausted by an air-pump,—a laborious process and one which can never be wholly successful, the creation of an artificial vacuum being almost impossible. But any child can empty the glass of air by filling it with water. The more water it contains the less air, and when entirely filled with the one element it is correspondingly emptied of the other. And we need to remember that God empties us by the Divine method of displacement. We are only self-emptied by being Spirit-filled. Thus to be emptied is a consequence and not a condition, and God's call is not to be emptied of self, but to "*be filled with the Spirit.*" In grace as in nature, the less is comprehended in the greater. What is required as the price of power however, is a willingness to be emptied, and then in the enablement of the Spirit a continuous looking away from self,—even from the thus emptied self, and a looking off unto Jesus, who increasingly becomes to us, by the guidance and teaching of the Comforter, Lord and King.

"Ye serve the Lord
Christ."—COL. 3: 24.

X

THE MANIFESTATION OF POWER

ALL the foregoing truth relating to the work of the Holy Spirit, and His definite reception by yielded souls as the seal of consecration and the enduement for life, leads on to a brief consideration of the great outcome of His fullness in the lives of God's people. It has already been noted (chap. 6) that this identity of enduement with the Lord Jesus points to a corresponding identity of life and service to which His people are called, for "*he that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do because I go to My Father*" (John 14: 12). This service is but the effluence of the Holy Spirit, of Whose power we are not to be reservoirs but channels, for "*he that believeth on Me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water*" (John 7: 38). Hence the whole work of the Spirit in the believer may be summed up as directed towards making him usable and then using him, though in such manner as that these two processes go on simultaneously. And always the pattern of both usability and usefulness, of both life and labor, is the Lord Jesus Himself. Therefore let not any

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one who has sought and received by faith the fullness of the Holy Spirit imagine that the gift has been bestowed on him for his own enjoyment. If you are filled at all you are filled to flow. Holiness of life is not an end, but a means to an end in the plan of God: the end is a life of continual service for God and men. "*Ye shall be witnesses unto Me*" (Acts 1:8) is the precept which is linked with the promise of power, and what God hath joined cannot be dissevered without frustrating God's grace. And not only so, but the man who shirks the service will himself suffer, for "use it or lose it" is certainly true in regard to the endowment of the Spirit. In this matter "*there is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet and it tendeth to poverty*" (Prov. 11:24). Pentecost was a type as well as an inauguration, and as in that day the upper room of waiting led out into the wide fields of witness, so the unrevoked command which is binding upon every believer is His "*Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15). It is then for our personal share in the work of evangelizing the world that the Holy Spirit equips by daily conforming us in increasing degree to the image of Christ. And like Him, we are "*sanctified and sent into the world*" (John 10:36). Now it is necessary to understand the nature of Spirit-controlled and

Spirit-empowered service since we are sent forth to such by Christ's commission, and hence a brief survey of what it meant for Him to be sent into the world will best teach us what the outcome of this blessing must be in our own lives.

(a) The purpose of the service is ever the blessing of others. "*For their sakes*" (John 17 : 19) may be taken as the motto of the Lord's whole life. "OTHERS" was the great consideration which inspired all His service and sacrifice. An absorbing passion for saving men is the outstanding characteristic of His pattern life, and He sends His disciples out upon the same errand. Such a purpose demands whole-hearted concentration of effort for its accomplishment, and the Spirit-filled man must make everything subservient to this end—the salvation of souls. The Divine equipment is not given for any lower purposes, and all missions of mere education or amusement are not provided for in the Divine plan, and should find no place in the programme of His church. The service of the Spirit-filled believer, though it may take varying forms, is always directed to the salvation of souls, and the Spirit Who has made Christ real to him will constantly make Him real to others through him. With such an one, as with the Lord Himself, this purpose—"OTHERS"—so dominates his whole life that he is never released from the care of seeking "first the kingdom of God." It is not the fact

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that we "feel like singing all the time" which proves we are filled with the Spirit, but rather that we feel like serving and sacrificing all the time in order to save others. The fire of Pentecost is a burning fire of love and compassion for the fallen, and the true joy of the Lord is the joy of the Shepherd who has found the lost, unmindful of his own loss in the search. To the Spirit-anointed vision eternal things are tremendously real, and the man so anointed can only see one thing worth while in life—to pluck men as brands from the burning.

(b) The possibility of the service; "*that they also may be sanctified*" (John 17:19). Here in the Lord's life was an inspiring hope which made His service yet more acceptable to Him—the possibilities latent in the "others." Through them He foresaw the triumph of the Father's kingdom, and He was the Forerunner of the line who ever since have looked beyond the things seen to "the things which are not seen." And it is the possibility of Spirit-filled service which makes it of such vast importance to-day. When a Stephen is full of the Holy Ghost the outcome of his service and the laying down of his life is a Paul won for the kingdom, and many another hidden life is, like the corn of wheat which falls into the ground and dies, and is forgotten in the glory of its own harvest. Let this consideration, "*that they also may be*



sanctified," raise our conception of the potentiality of our service, and save us from regarding as of little moment how and when and where we serve. There are great issues dependent upon the Christian who is filled with the Spirit, for in a real sense to him are committed the keys of the kingdom. Therefore the possibilities of the service demand a quick obedience to the Spirit's commands, for if Philip does not join himself to the eunuch the whole of Ethiopia loses a potential witness for Christ.

(c) The price at which such service could be accomplished by the Lord Jesus is the same for His disciples to-day, and is contained in one word—sacrifice. He who saved others could not save Himself, and this is still true of those whom He sends into the world. He came "*to give His life*" (Matt. 20 : 28) for the world's blessing; and though in a vicarious sense it can never be true of His people that they so give themselves, yet in another and not less real sense it is true that in order to save others, we must lose our own lives. It is only when "death worketh in us" that life works in them, and self-sacrifice is the only secret of soul-winning. There is no real gain except by loss, and the service to which the Spirit-filled believer is sent is no easy pathway, for it involves pouring out the life for others even as Christ "poured out His soul unto death." See how

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practically this principle worked out in Christ's life and how it made Him deny Himself the things that might so well have been enjoyed had not the needs and claims of a lost world pressed upon Him. To Him life itself was not a treasure but a trust, not a thing to be guarded for Himself but to be given for others. With Him indeed

Love has a hem of its garment
That touches the very dust ;
It can reach the stains of the streets and the lanes,
And because it can, it must.

It dare not rest on the mountain
It is bound to come to the vale ;
For it cannot find its fullness of mind
Till it falls on the lives that fail.

And the place of its deepest shadow
Most reveals its strength to save ;
Since its fairest hour is seen in the flower
That blossoms above the grave.

And He is the example for the service of His people, to whom He is ever saying "follow thou Me," and whose service is but the continuation of His work through them upon His plan, in His power and for His praise.

When the water-pots are filled, then the command immediately comes to "draw out now and bear to the Governor of the feast."

"Grieve not the Holy
Spirit of God."—EPH.
4 : 30.

XI

CONTINUANCE AND INCREASE OF POWER

IN connection with the power of the Spirit it must be remembered that continuance is the test of reality, and increase of power is the proof of maintained relationship with Him. But continuance is contingent upon obedience, and increase is conditioned by faithfulness. In grace as in nature there operates a law which may thus be expressed,—that power is at the disposal of him who obeys its governing conditions. This is clearly seen in those natural forces of which the laws are being increasingly understood, and which are in consequence becoming increasingly applicable to our varied needs. Similarly there is a "*law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*" (Rom. 8 : 2), a governing law of spiritual power, obedience to which conditions an unchecked flow of His power in our lives, but which if disregarded predetermines conversely decrease and decline.

In closing therefore these brief chapters about the work of the Holy Spirit it is necessary to point out the possibility of losing His power by willful

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disregard of the simple laws which govern His abiding. To be forewarned is to be forearmed, for many who were once "endued with power from on high" have apparently gone back again to the old condition of powerlessness and uselessness, and stand out therefore as warnings to those who have been led on to accept the gift of the Spirit. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"; for the price of power has to be paid not once but daily and hourly, and failure here is failure indeed.

It is significant to note the treatment to which the Holy Spirit may be subjected where there is unwillingness for His control. He may be

Grieved - - - Eph. 4 : 30,

Resisted - - - Acts 7 : 51,

Vexed - - - Isa. 63 ; 10,

Lied unto and tempted - Acts 5 : 3-9,

Done despite unto - Heb. 10 : 29,

Quenched - - - 1 Thess. 5 : 19 ;

and this is always possible, even to one who has previously known His fullness. The only safeguard against such a fall is a continuous walking "by the Spirit" (Gal. 5 : 25) in glad obedience to all His directions. He is the sensitive Guest Who is easily grieved, but Who on the other hand is also easily pleased. If it is remembered that His object in all His dealings with us is to make actual our identification with the Lord Jesus, then it will

be seen that what grieves Him is any unwillingness on our part for the actual process of heart-conformity to His image. In order to reveal to us such things as must be renounced, and at the same time to make us conscious of the things that are lacking, He uses a variety of means. For example, He puts us into the crucible of circumstances just as a refiner and purifier of silver puts his metal into the furnace whose heat causes the dross to appear. Those daily experiences under whose severe tests, hidden impatience and irritability, unsuspected uncleanness of desire, unknown selfishness and lack of love is discovered to our own consciousness, are His means for teaching us the self-knowledge which is a necessary element of power. At the same time He reveals the grace in Christ which is the antithesis of our thus-discovered sin, and only by confession of the one and reception of the other can we express obedience and thus secure the increase of His power. But many who begin with Him shrink from submission as thus He applies the Cross to their lives, and thereby create a leakage of power which soon manifests itself despite all attempts at keeping up spiritual appearances. And that others may be kept from failing similarly to coöperate with Him either in the renunciation of the old life or in the reception of new command, this twofold precept cannot be too strongly enjoined—*trust and obey!*

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It is not possible to tabulate the many causes by which He is frequently grieved and His power lost in many lives, but it may be of help to some to have knowledge of a few of the commoner reasons for the loss of power, that they may be watchful against giving them any place. The Holy Spirit is grieved by —

Any departure from the attitude of entire surrender and consecration to God.

Any unwillingness to yield aught which He condemns in the life.

Any disobedience to His calls for service ; and the employment of any methods in service other than those He directs.

Any willful seeking of self-glory as an outcome of His indwelling.

Any deliberate choice of things unclean and admittedly contrary to the known will of God.

Any neglect of the Word of God and prayer.

Each of these will be recognized as a contravention of the threefold principle of *faith*, *obedience*, and *dependence*, which may be taken as a comprehensive statement of "the law of the Spirit of Life." To maintain the fullness which has been received, and to have an increased measure of the Spirit's influence and effluence, this threefold attitude must be continued towards Him unbrokenly.

Does the price of power seem too heavy ? Think